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Group Ethics Rules

Opening Suggestions!

Raven

Too often I had seen the Craft used as a personal power-trip, or with a disregard for the effects on others. This time it happened in my home.

I introduced two guests, acquaintances of mine, to each other. One was interested in learning about the Craft; the other offered to teach him. The would-be teacher went on about his skills, describing the would-be student's aura and psychic shields; leaned back in his chair, said, "I really shouldn't do this, I really shouldn't" - then leaned forward and, with no warning or other preliminary, SLICED the student's shields "open" (as he said), leaving the student feeling naked and exposed.

To prove a point, I suppose, but what point I can't guess.

I was outraged. Guests in my home are not to be abused - by anyone. Even to a complete materialist, it would be clear that the student had had his personal space invaded, his emotional consolation removed, with no informed consent involved, and with no feeling of other protection.

I already knew the would-be teacher himself was taught by people of no great concern for ethics. His was chiefly a fault of poor training, added to which he had never stopped to think that "occult" dealings with people might involve the same ethical issues as "mundane" dealings.

One of the several outcomes of that event was that I wrote the following guidelines for those two specific people, and suggested (NOT ordered) that they adopt these - if they did still decide to work together. After that, well, several other people did express an interest.

Note! This was written as a PROPOSAL; no-one has enacted it as a LAW. The hope is for it to be used by, and among, those who like the ideas. (Really, all it does is put the concept of "Harm ye none" in practice.)

Rules Of The Circle

The Rules Of Informed Consent

1. Tell everyone participating what to expect, before the circle is closed or anything else begins.
2. Give everyone participating the chance to say NO and to withdraw, before the circle is closed or anything else begins - and then respect that decision.
3. Be open, honest, and fair: spring no surprises, trip no traps; NEVER use what you learn or do in circle to manipulate or compel any other person, or diminish anyone's dignity and free will.

The Rules Of Privacy

1. Encourage people not to wander in and out of any session between its beginning and ending, or cross the circle while it is closed.
2. Protect every session from interruption by (or intrusion on) any outsiders - by closed or locked doors, a fence, or some other clear marking outside the circle.
3. While proceedings may not be secret, they ARE always private; keep silent about who and what you see or hear in circle, unless you have each other participant's specific consent.

The Rules Of Shielding

1. ALWAYS, ALWAYS close the circle and raise your wards before beginning, or continuing after a break.
2. ALWAYS, ALWAYS dismiss your wards and open the circle after ending, or to allow passage across the circle.
3. Conduct yourself with mutual respect and due courtesy, without malice or ill will toward anyone, or else ask that the circle be opened and that you be dismissed from the session.

Covenant

The Teacher Promises The Student

1. I will abide by the Rules of the Circle.
2. I will ask from you no more than you can give.
3. I will not expect you to read my mind.
4. I will not hide from you my limits or gaps in knowledge; if I just don't know, I'll tell you so.
5. I will explain, to the best of my ability, not only what to do and how, but also why.
6. I will not push you beyond your ability or willingness to proceed.
7. I realize that I may be tempted to become dominating, a "leader" - and I will do my best to resist this temptation.
8. Because I received from others without payment, I will give to you without payment.
9. As I can, I will learn from you in turn.

The Student Promises The Teacher

1. I will abide by the Rules of the Circle.
2. I will ask from you no more than you can give.
3. I will not expect you to read my mind.
4. If I have questions about what you show me, I will ask you.
5. If I fail to understand anything, I will mention it.
6. If I feel unready to proceed, I will tell you.
7. I realize that I may be tempted to become dependent, a "follower" - and I will do my best to resist this temptation.
8. Because I receive from you without payment, I will give to others without payment.
9. As I can, I will teach you in turn.

A circle is not a line: it has no beginning and no end.
A circle is not a pyramid: it has no top and no bottom.
A circle is not an asterisk: it is not run from just one point.

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